

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OMB-01 CU-04 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 AID-20 PC-04 DRC-01 /155 W

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P R 031023Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1375

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 8108

EO 11652 GDS

TAGS: PINT KS

SUBJ: CHURCH PROTESTS CONTINUE

1. CHURCH PROTESTS IN SEOUL CONTINUED OVER THE WEEKEND. ON SUNDAY DEC 2, A DEMONSTRATION TOOK PLACE AT HYONGCHE METHODIST CHURCH. AFTER MORNING SERVICES A GROUP OF 22 PEOPLE LED BY EVANGELIST KIM HONG-KI MARCHED INTO STREET CARRYING PLACARD WITH SLOGAN "DICTATORIAL REGIME STEP DOWN" AND DEMANDING:

- A. RELEASE ARRESTED STUDENTS;
- B. RESTORE FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND PRESS;
- C. STOP CAMPUS SURVEILLANCE;
- D. STOP CHURCH SURVEILLANCE.

POLICE ARRESTED DEMONSTRATORS, BUT RELEASED 18 IN THE EVENING INCLUDING REF KIM. CHRISTIAN SOURCE SAYS FOUR ARE STILL BEING HELD. PARENTS OF REV KIM WHO TRIED TO BRING FOOD TO PRISONERS MORNING OF DEC 3 WERE ALSO TAKEN INTO CUSTODY. METHODIST CHURCH LEADERS MET MONDAY, DEC 3 AND FORMED ACTION

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COMMITTEE TO AID HYONGCHE PRISONERS.

2. A SECOND DEMONSTRATION WAS ATTEMPTED AT CHUNGHYUN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, ON DEC 2 BUT POLICE WHO HAD BEEN ALERTED, INTERCEPTED MARCHERS UPON LEAVING CHURCH THUS ENDING PROTEST. THIRD DEMONSTRATION WAS BRIEFLY STAGED ON DEC 1 BY SOME HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN YARD OF KYUNG DONG CHURCH, BUT QUICKLY BROKEN UP BY POLICE.

3. IN OTHER DEVELOPMENT NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHRISTIAN CHURCHES OFFICIAL INFORMED EMBOFF THAT CHURCH LEADERS HAVE LITTLE FAITH THAT DEC 3 CABINET CHANGE WILL BRING SIGNIFICANT POLICY CHANGES AND THEY WILL THEREFORE CONTINUE TO SUPPORT PROTESTS. HOWEVER, THEY SEE SOME HOPE IN ELIMINATION OF YI HU-RAK AND POSSIBLY GREATER INFLUENCE OF KIM CHONG-PIL. SAID CHURCH LEADERS HAVE LITTLE FAITH IN NEW ROK-CIA CHIEF SHIN CHIK-SU, WHOM HE SAID THEY REGARD AS NO DIFFERENT FROM EX CIA CHIEF YI.

4. ACCORDING TO NCCC GENSEC KIM KWAN SUK, ROK-CIA HAS PLANNED A MEETING WITH CHURCH LEADERS ON DEC 6. KIM SAID CARDINAL KIM HAS ALSO BEEN INVITED TO DISCUSS CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS WITH UNNAMED HIGH GOVERNMENT LEADERS. REV KIM SAID HE AND CARDINAL CONFERRED ON JOINT APPROACH TO ROKG AND AGREED THAT GREATER FREEDOM AND CHANGE OF YUSHIN CONSTITUTION REMAIN CONDITIONS FOR IMPROVING CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS. KIM SAID A MAJOR JOINT CATHOLIC-PROTESTANT PROTEST MEETING IS PLANNED FOR DEC 16 AT YMCA AT THE END OF CHRISTIAN PROTEST PRAYER WEEK. HE INDICATED THAT CARDINAL KIM HAS AGREED TO BE KEYNOTE SPEAKER. UNDERHILL

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